

The latest tactic in the Government's plans to rid the world of the BBC, and prevent any Community Radio station take to the air appears to have gone unnoticed in certain quarters. In fact the whole business of the dropping of plans for Community Radio for the near future, due to lack of parliamentary time seems to have just slipped by, totally unnoticed by the media in a complete mirror image of the events when the plans for the opening of the airwaves was announced. Even Alasdair Milne, the former BBC Director General does not yet appear to be aware of the latest postponement. Whilst on the Radio Four Programme *Loose Ends*, June 11th he spoke of the forthcoming Autumn Broadcasting Bill. Do you think we should tell him?

Your Editor is confused again, not that it is particularly difficult to get him in that state of mind. The Mandella Day concert which was simulcast on BBC Television and Radio on June 11th could be heard in FM Stereo on Radio One, that was until 1930 when we were informed to switch to our BBC Local Radio station (at this point a number of frequencies at the rate of ten per second were flashed across the bottom of our TV screen) Bearing in mind that most people wanting to hear the programme were already happily tuned into Radio One on FM, why the switch? Radio Two normally reclaims the FM channel at this time on a Saturday evening, together with the FM outlets of most of the aforementioned BBC locals who are not transmitting their own programmes. So with Radio Two normally heard over the local outlets there can be little harm in letting Radio One keep the main FM channel just for once can there? Here we come back to the old arguments of Radio One having its own FM, across the country.

Former Radio Caroline DJ Roger Gale, now part of the establishment in his role as one of the Kentish MPs had another 15 minutes fame recently with his amendment to the criminal justice bill, suggesting that juries be given the right to suggest to the judge that a person be hanged for murder. The motion was defeated. We wonder if Mr Gale is prepared to suggest a similar amendment to the Marine Offences Act?

Radio Caroline favourite Raffles the dog has not been heard of on board the *Ross Revenge* for several months now. Wavelength can tell you that Raffles is now permanently on dry land, after six months quarantine under an assumed name, and is living at the home of long serving Caroline Engineer Peter Chicago who saved the dog from death while the ship was being fitted out in Chicago.

High Wycombe Police were mystified when they heard a couple whispering sweet nothings to each other in Dutch over the Police frequencies. It turned out that Sporadic E had brought the couple's tender love to a far greater audience than intended, messing up Police operations in High Wycombe no end!

For Sale: Ex Army Fort situated in the Thames Estuary. Ideal for budding Offshore Radio stations. Known as Grain Tower the property is near to the Isle of Grain and can house up to 50 men, as well as 3 cannons. The property is constructed of Concrete and granite and is 133 years old. Offers in the region of £50,000 to estate agents Cluttons. Too good to be true? Well Yes. The property is only 500 yards from the coast, well within territorial waters, but the 500 foot causeway which links the tower to the mainland is only accessible at low tide!

Police swooped on London News station LBC in the early hours of May 19th after the channel broadcast an item on Devil Worshippers during which a self confessed Satanist claimed that Devil worshippers in Essex had carried out human sacrifices. Brian Leftwich was interviewed by Police after the *Nightline* programme but no charges followed. Mr Leftwich has been dismissed as a "Complete Nutter".

JUNE-JULY 1988

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Po Box 5, Hunstanton, Norfolk, PE36 5AU.

WAVELLENGTH

June/July 1988 - Number Twenty-Two.

WAVELLENGTH EDITOR: Adrian Cooke.

FEATURE WRITERS: Neil Frazer, Andy Walker, Steve West, Mike Ross, John

Hickling and Paul Watson

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 - A second series on Radio in the Irish Republic
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 - The battle for Short Wave channels for the Free Radio operator.
- BRIEFING
15. CLOSE UP: WCSN, The Christian Science Monitor.
 - ... AND FINALLY
 - Our Sideways look at the World of Radio.

FRONT ILLUSTRATION: Farewell Radio Monique

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DEADLINE FOR NUMBER TWENTY-THREE is July 31st, 1988

M.V. ROSS REVENGE

Wednesday April 27th, 1988.

After the best part of a fortnight where Richard Lee and Paul Graham were required to present shows for 6 hours a day a change of staff on the Ross Revenge brought listeners to Caroline 558 a totally fresh line up, however the staffing problems had not been solved and it was necessary to borrow the services of two Dutch presenters who were working on bringing back the 819 service. Erwin Van der Blieck and Ad Roberts were heard for four hours a day. In addition to presenting the Breakfast Show Steve Conway was also compiling the news bulletins for that, and the other programmes. The full schedule is read as follows.

- 0500 Steve Conway
- 1000 Mike Williams
- 1500 Erwin Van der Blieck
- 1700 Ad Roberts
- 1900 John Bibby
- 0100 Closedown.

Mention must be given to John Bibby who hosted several marathon shows, only surpassed by Mark Matthews 1700 - 0100 stints in the Spring of 1986. Ad Roberts and Erwin Van der Blieck both presented entertaining shows. Ad was particularly amusing by introducing records as "spiffing" in an upper class English Accent. The Shortwave frequency now changed to 6215kHz.

A Classic on air comment came from Steve Conway on April 30th, when at 0800, just into the news bulletin the 558 transmitter cut out. At which point we quickly switched the shortwave outlet to hear Steve say "Peter, Transmitter's died" There then followed some background noises until the microphone was faded down. Peter was obviously quick to solve the problem as 558 was back on the air a few minutes later. Revised scheduling took place from today, and the station returned to the familiar four hour shift pattern at 0500, 0900, 1300, 1700 and 2100.

A new chapter in Offshore Broadcasting took place on May 1st, when after many weeks preparation the new religious service took to the air on the Shortwave Frequency 6215, Under the name of World Mission Radio. Programming consists at present of continuous religious music varying from rock Gospel to more traditional tracks. The Dutch Evangelist, and long standing user of the offshore broadcasters Johann Maaschbach has also been heard with regular programmes. Identifications for this WMR are given regularly in the form of a close harmony jingle "World Mission Radio - WMR" followed by the address in English and another language, such as Dutch, Spanish or French. The address is Box 3416, Corona, California 91719 USA.

After the staffing problems of previous weeks programming on 558 took on a brighter look from May 12th. The return of Keith Francis and Steve Masters was the first step with Keith taking up the breakfast show, enabling Steve Conway to concentrate on the News broadcasts. Steve Masters gave Drivetime a "New Look" (This turned out to be the first of four new looks over the next few weeks!) The news headlines returned on the half hour, these had been dropped in January 1986, and were heard at 1630, 1730 with a summary of the day's events at 1830. Travel was given a regular time and broadcast at 1715, 1745, 1815 and 1845. A similar arrangement was given to travel bulletins during the Breakfast Show. The line up read

0500 Keith Francis	News; Steve Conway
0900 Mike Williams	
1300 Erwin Van der Blieck	
1700 Steve Masters	
2100 Ad Roberts	
2300 John Bibby	
0100 Closedown.	

Further revisions were later made to the schedule, so from May 16th it

was amended to

0500 Keith Francis
0900 Steve Conway
1200 Erwin Van der Blieck
1600 Steve Masters
2000 John Bibby
2100 Mike Williams.

At this time the late evening slot aquired a name "Cuddle Up with Caroline" On May 22nd, following much speculation a relay of Caroline 558 was heard on the Dutch channel 819KHz. There had been rumours circulating that the 558 transmitter might be taken out of service during daylight hours to be used for the Dutch language programmes further up the band. Luckily for listeners to Caroline this did not take place. The 819 relay was heard irregularly over the next few days.

Two fresh names joined the Caroline family on May 26th, although the Voice of one was very familiar. Rob Harrison had been on board the Ross Revenge only two months previously under the name of Robbie Jay. The other name belonged to Dave Asher. Rob was on air at 0900 replacing Steve Conway who returned to the newsroom once more, and again at 2000 that evening in what he Christened the "Odd Hour" possibly because it had been hosted by a number of different presenters over the past few days. Dave Asher presented his first show at 0100 on the Thursday morning, but it was a slot he was to hold for only a few days. Erwin Van der Blieck presented his last programme for Caroline on May 27th, ending his programme by advising us to listen to "acht, een, negen" (819)

On May 30th test transmissions were heard in the Dutch language on 819 with programmes from Ad Roberts and Erwin Van der Blieck. Despite being "tests" there were some advertisements from former advertisers to Radio Monique. An address of Box 146, Playa de Aro, Gerona, Spain. was announced. There has been speculation that the station will eventually identify as Radio Northsea 819 with FRS Holland reporting that many Jingles from the popular 70s station Radio Northsea International have been resung for 819. Although there is no connection with the management of the former station. In the meantime the 819 broadcasts have been identified as either "RM" or "819"

Tuesday May 31st, after another UK Bank Holiday saw a break in format for Caroline 558. "North Sea Gold", broadcast at 2000 each evening brought 60 minutes of classic hits from the past, taken mainly from the 1960s, and it appears that after a few weeks on air the programme is already a hit with the listeners. Some classic Caroline Jingles have also been heard. The line up now read;

0500 Keith Francis
0900 Rob Harrison
1300 Dave Asher
1600 Steve Masters
2000 North Sea Gold
2100 Mike Williams
0100 Closedown

News: Steve Conway

Advertisements were carried for Lotto 649, which have been more prominent of late and have included the return of some of the older advertisements - "Get ready to get rich. . ." In addition regular Caroline Rock Shows are promoted, and the Milderhall Rock and Blues festival, which has also been advertised on local ILR station Saxon Radio in Bury St. Edmunds. International time checks similar to those once given on Laser 558 have also been heard. "It's 3.15 in London and 4.15 in Amsterdam. . ."

Steve Masters left on June 5th, his place on Drivetime being taken by Steve Conway, who then renamed the show as "Powerdrive" curiously Powerdrive are one of the bands appearing at the Rock and Blues Festival! Mike Williams also left at this time. On June 6th Mike Watts hosted the 2100 programme, but for the remainder of the week it was shared between Dave Asher, and Ad

Roberts. An announced closedown was made after the 0900 News on June 7th, with the station promising to return at 1600. However no more was heard until June 8th. World Mission Radio was also off the air at this time.

June 11th brought two new staff on board to bring the on air crew up to full strength. Ian Mack was first heard at 0900 and Neil Gates at 2100. Ian then slotted into Powerdrive, whilst Neil retained Cuddle Up with Caroline.

During the week we noted that Powerdrive ended at 1900, and the next two hours were spun by Paul Pawnon (We've guessed the spelling here!)

On Saturday Morning, June 18th the schedule became slightly warped to what we had become accustomed to. The line-up regularly changes at the weekends but on this occasion so did the time slots. It reads 0500 Steve Conway, 0800 Keith Francis, 1100 Dave Asher, 1400 Ian Mack, 1700 Rob Harrison, 2000 Paul Pawnon, 2200 Neil Gates, 0100 John Bibby. On Sunday Night/Monday Morning the station closed at 0100. With Steve Conway spinning records a new Australian Voice was heard in the newsroom. That of Mike Dundee who presented the Early and lunchtime news bulletins, Mike however was not heard on air after this. Ian Mack hosted what he called the "DIY Show" whilst the listener was expected to do every household repair job imaginable, Ian just played the records to listen to! On Sunday Ian was joined in the Studio by a passing carrier pigeon, on examining its ring it was discovered the pigeon came from Wales, the number was also read out on air.

22nd June saw the departure of Steve Conway, although not for long, and Keith Francis. No replacements were available so the Programme schedules were moved forward and each presented Five hours, starting with Rob Harrison at 0500.

TECHNICAL POINTS

The Carbon fibre aerial does not appear to have been a success. With a further mast being erected on the back deck instead. Following damage sustained to the carbon fibre aerial some repairs are being attempted by Peter Chicago the station engineer.

The new generator has recently been installed on the Ross Revenge however we are reliably informed that it is not in full service.

PEOPLE

Ad Roberts is no stranger to Radio Caroline as he presented programmes on the Dutch Service in the days of the Mi Amigo during the 1970s, fellow Dutch man Erwin Van der Blieck has like Ad been heard on Radio Monique, and both are lined up for the new Dutch service Northsea 819 when programmes commence. Mike Williams comes from the South Coast of England and was heard on Eastbourne's ABC Radio.

It was a warm welcome back to 'Big' Keith Francis who was last heard in December 1987 shortly after the fateful date when the mast fell down. Keith has given his own style to the Breakfast Show, and like many Presenters on board recently has been able to show more of his own personality. Rob Harrison may be a new name but the voice is certainly familiar Rob appears to have received a personality transplant from Robbie Jay. Previous people to go through this transformation were Alton Andrews who became Mark Summers and Jimmy Bond became Fergie McNeil.

Dave Asher was a regular with the Voice of Peace before joining Caroline. Now an Israeli citizen Dave has amused us all by his various Silly Voices he uses through the programme. Originally Dave came from Oxfordshire.

FM 88	92	96	100	104	108	MHz
SW 60	65	80	10.0	13.0	18.0	MHz
MW 54	60	70	80	100	120	140
LW 150	170	190	220	250	270	285



MUSIC

The Top Forty format continues with the exception of the weekday North Sea Gold programme, in addition more oldies are being played through the rest of the day. One record which received a lot of airplay prior to the Nelson Mandella concert was "Mandella Day" by Simple Minds. It is not commercially available as the band did not wish to make any money from it although the possibility remains that it may appear on a Charity Album later in the year. Mandella Day was sent to Radio stations ahead of the concert to gauge public opinion. That was certainly favourable.

Short Wave GREAT BRITAIN

ON THE BANDS

Listeners to RADIO PAMELA (1) have been experiencing difficulties in receiving the station due to a frequency disagreement with Radio East Coast Commercial (See feature "Keep this Frequency Clear") Pamela were using 6224 on April 24th, but from May 15th moved to 6815 which they had used occasionally in the past primarily for QSO broadcasts. Radio East Coast Commercial switched to 6815 on April 3rd (See Wavelength 21.)

RADIO 48 (2) were noted on April 24th on 6287 and again the following week on 6290 as part of a joint broadcast with Sister station Radio Apollo. This special transmission was from the Apollo Studio at Scott Base and also used the Apollo aerial, however the transmitter was provided by Radio 48. The presenter was Apollo's Dave Scott and a special QSL has been produced for the broadcast.

RADIO ORION (3) continue to be heard regularly every Sunday on 6300, although we have not noted any Saturday broadcasts recently. On May 1st comments were made concerning some of the misgivings of Satellite Radio. The question was put that if a station cannot be received on a domestic radio, and only on specialist equipment which cannot realistically be moved around the house, is it really radio? A Good point! A New address has been acquired by the station and Orion continues to oblige WFRL by moving off the 6300 channel for their second Sunday broadcast, usually to 6290.

RADIO EAST COAST COMMERCIAL (4) have been heard on a number of occasions (and frequencies) since their move to 6815 in April, caused by their disagreement with Radio Pamela over the use of the channel. In addition to the regular first Sunday transmission the station has also been heard on 8th, 15th and 22nd May on 6815, On June 5th and 12th on both 6310 (the station's former channel) and 6815. On June 19th Radio East Coast Commercial used both 6230 and 6815. Reception of the latter channel is impossible when Radio Pamela is present on the same frequency.

WFRL - WONDERFUL FREE RADIO LONDON (4) celebrated their 2nd birthday in style May 8th by operating on both 48 and 41 metres. The 6300 transmitter was on air between 1000 and 1200 whilst on 7385 programmes were heard from 0900 to 1300. There was a favourable response to the 7385 programmes with well over 18 reports being received, mainly from central Europe. Excellent skip conditions ensured a wide audience for the 6300 transmitter as well.

Whilst on air the 6300 transmitter ran in parallel with 7385. WFRL are planning to launch a Worldwide service using various frequencies, tests are expected shortly on 11115 (26 metres) and additional programming will include a magazine type programme.

BRI - BRITAIN RADIO INTERNATIONAL will be celebrating their eighth birthday on June 26th on 6304. For various reasons the station has been unable to adhere to its scheduled second and fourth Sunday broadcasts, notwithstanding the station remains one of the most popular on Shortwave having recently been voted Second in a poll of stations conducted by PIN Magazine. (285)

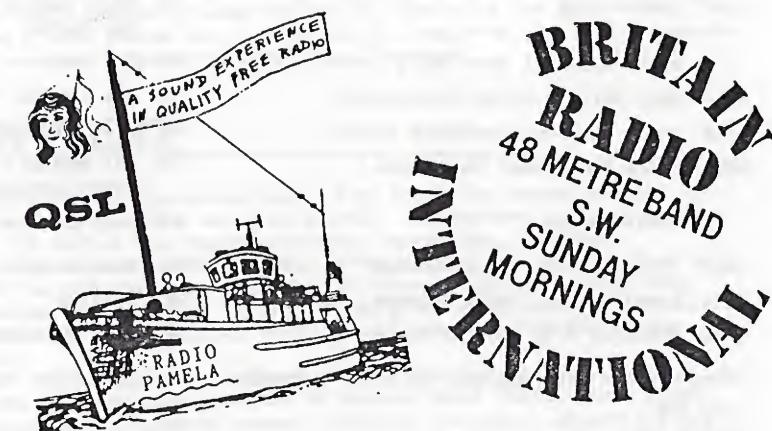
RTR (6) continue to be heard regularly on the air when presenter Steve Masters is not on board the Ross Revenge. The regular channel in 6257 where they were heard on June 12th and again the following week.

IRELAND

RADIO RAINBOW (7) who are responsible for a number of regular relay stations switched frequencies on May 1st to avoid heavy Morse interference on 6240 which has increased in recent weeks. The new channel was 6230, planned as a temporary move until a crystal for 6235 could be obtained. However it was to 6318 that the station made the second move on June 19th. The Scottish Free Radio Network have vacated this channel for the time being. Relays on Rainbow come from WLR, Guernsey Sound and Crusin' Solid Gold.

THE SCOTTISH FREE RADIO NETWORK (8) have been missing from 6318 since May 15th after the transmitter burnt out, although programmes from the Network have continued to be aired via transmitters in the 41 metre band as well as those heard over the airwaves of Radio Rainbow. The 41 metre transmissions have been on 7428, 7434 and 7446. On May 1st the 7434 broadcast was announced as a test from Radio Stella, and it is now planned that one of the transmitters will be moved down to 48 metres to restore this service. With Radio Rainbow currently occupying 6318 it is not known if the SFRN will return to this channel. Regular Dx programmes are carried by both Radio Stella and WLR. Of particular interest is Jim Willet's Dx tips on WLR which on April 24th featured long wave dx'ing, a subject which is rarely covered elsewhere by Dx programmes. It is generally known that programmes from the Scottish Free Radio Network are transmitted from Ireland, hence their inclusion in this section.

WABC (9) who transmitted regularly on frequencies around 6297 have not been logged since April 1st, and it is assumed that Short Wave broadcasts have now ceased.



EUROPE

FRS HOLLAND will be missing from their regular 3rd Sunday broadcast in July, however the station will be back on air with an extended broadcast in August to celebrate eight years on the air (another eighth birthday) The station was logged on June 19th with a first class signal on 6205. (10) RADIO BATIDA who were on the air a few years back intend to make a return broadcast in the near future on 48 metres with a power of 100 watts.

ADDRESS BOOK

1. 10 Bromyard Crescent, Paulsgrove, Portsmouth, PO6 3SP.
2. Postbus 19074, 3501DB, Utrecht, The Netherlands.
3. Po Box 1280, Rednall, Birmingham, B45 8SQ.
4. Po Box 5, Hunstanton, Norfolk, PE36 5AU.
5. 32 Victoria Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP1 3NG.
6. Po Box 140, Ashford, Kent.
7. 151 Moneymore, Drogheda, County Louth, Ireland.
8. 23 South Beechwood, Edinburgh, EH12 5TR.
9. Po Box 1242, Coleraine, County Londonderry, Northern Ireland.
10. Postbus 41, 7700 AA Dedemsvaart, The Netherlands.

LISTENER'S GUIDE**TABLE OF REGULAR FREE RADIO BROADCASTERS**

6205	FRS Holland (Relay)	NL	3rd Sunday
6215	World Mission Radio (Radio Caroline)	International Waters	Daily
6280	Westside Radio (Including Relays)	IRL	Every Sunday
6290	Radio Orion	GB	Second Sunday
6295	Radio Krystel	GB	4th Sunday
6300	Radio Orion	GB	Every Sunday except 2nd Sunday
	WFRL: Wonderful Free Radio London	GB	2nd Sunday
6304	BRI: Britain Radio International	GB	2nd and 4th Sundays
6318	Radio Rainbow (Including Relays)	IRL	Every Sunday
6815	Radio East Coast Commercial	GB	1st Sunday + occasional other Sundays.
	Radio Pamela	GB	Most Sundays
7428	Scottish Free Radio Network	IRL	Most Sundays
7434	Scottish Free Radio Network	IRL	Testing
7446	Scottish Free Radio Network	IRL	Most Sundays
Other regular stations with no fixed schedule			
6257	RTR	GB	
6285	Radio Apollo	GB	

LONDON**Andy Walker**

Up and down the band I go, The more I listen, the boredom grows! You may think that the London Radio pirates sound really great, but believe me the standard of the capital's private radio broadcasters is fast going downhill. The reason, to me, must be clear. DJs are on edge at the thought of "Eric the Hitman" and Co. bursting through the studio door, speaking those famous words "You're Nicking" even the big boys programming is going downhill. Soul radio just isn't the same anymore. When the stations get back on the air after a raid, it isn't long before the DTI do the rounds again and put them off. If the DTI must raid, why don't they raid the rubbish stations, operators who have no idea of how to programme a broadcasting set up. Thinking of which CLASSIC RADIO 105.4 FM are now 7 days/24 hours with some of the worst DJ'ing you have ever heard. LONDON IRISH COMMUNITY RADIO, the Loadsawatts establishment from Ealing/Acton area fell to a Tx and Studio raid in the first week in May which ended a couple of months of broadcasting. In the short time it was on the air LICR had built up a strong following with the Irish residents of London. Station owner Jimmy Smith has started a petition to get the station back on the air, but as we all know, it won't do him any good! So it seems another station is down and out of the game, who will be next? Only time will tell.

I hope CD-93 can get their act together and make it on the air every week as the music is very good indeed, shame about some of the jocks. CD-93 share a rig with Starpoint Radio who do their bit on a Sunday, of course with CD on air Saturday. It's great to hear a station playing Top Forty music again, The return of HITS FM 98.3 who were on the airwaves about two years ago, at least the station lives up to its name by playing all the chart hits. I am lead to believe it is run by ex-members of the other Hits FM, the oldies station who only play old records, so it's a bit daft calling an Oldies station Hits FM. If you think about it a Hit is only a Hit when it is in the Top Forty. Am I right or what? Anyway the two stations have been having a go at each other, Well the old Hits has, the new hits plays non-stop music with adverts and jingles. Anyhow the old Hits has been acting like a bitchy girl in a Cat fight by slagging off the station. Silly really but girls will be girls I suppose.

London's regular rock music station RFM 94.3 are still going strong with good album tracks on a Sunday, with part-timers London Rock on Saturday nights when they fancy switching the rig on. Some hot gossip from the old hippies of Alice's Restaurant, London's ex-mega rock outfit. News on the grapevine tells me that they may be planning to follow in Chris Carey's footsteps and try out satellite broadcasting. Don't forget you read it here first, If the idea takes off, takes off get it! That's it for this time, I'm going to have a tune around the band to see if I can here the DTI's campaign to put this back on London's airwaves. Bye. Hisssssss

NORTH WEST

RADIO MERSEY WAVES are operating mainly from Friday to Monday on 1242. A sizable increase in power is expected shortly. The station is using a new address of 126 Curlew Way, Moreton, Wirral, Merseyside, L46 7SS.

RADIO ATLANTIS operates mainly Friday to Monday on 1197. DJ Rick Dane is very much on his own since the departure of Stephen Bishop. Besides long hours presenting Rick can also be heard voicing the commercials which the station carries. 1 Yew Tree Lane, West Derby, Liverpool, L12 9HG is the address here.

NORTH COAST RADIO operate on Sundays on 1350 from around 1100. Many of the staff have been involved with the FM station Radio Julie. North Coast can be contacted at 26 Harcourt Avenue, Seacombe, Wallasey, Merseyside L44 6LJ.

LIVERPOOL PIRATE RADIO operates on low power Sundays on 1413. They can be contacted at 30 Elkstone Road, Norris Green, Liverpool L11 2TD.

STORETON COMMUNITY RADIO are expected to return to the air soon on their familiar frequency of 1026.

A number of FM stations are also operating including Radio Julie 104.8, Slag Off International on 105.3, Radio Veronica on 104.7 and Concept Radio on 104.3.

THIRD BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS AT VERONICA 104

A listeners Top 104 of all time was part of the elaborate plans for Merseyside station Radio Veronica to celebrate three years of album and rock music to Liverpool. The chart was compiled from listeners' requests and Personal Top Tens which had been compiled over the past two years and broadcast on Sunday June 5th from 10am to 6pm with DJs Jeff King, Dean Bartlett, Neil Frazer and Adrian Cooke. The celebrations commenced on the Friday when the station, which normally limits itself to Sunday Afternoons and evenings began rebroadcasting a selection of past programmes, which was introduced by Neil Frazer. Further programmes followed on Saturday, although during the latter part of the day some technical troubles began when a buzz appeared on the carrier alongside the audio, a problem which reoccurred on the Sunday. It was a problem which Veronica had endured in the past. This and some unkept promises in organisation marred what was for the most part an entertaining and enjoyable weekend.

CHESHIRE

OUTLOCK on 96.3 are still on the air Sundays with religious programming. No address is given.

MANCHESTER

Things are quiet here at the moment. The only station heard recently has been WBLS on 102.4, operating evenings with a Soul format.

LEEDS

Two stations still regular are ABC on 105 and PEOPLES' FM on 91.8 both operate mainly during the evenings.

MIDLANDS

John Hickling

EAST MIDLANDS.

Derby . . . RADIO FREEDOM (105.5 Mhz FM)

As Usual activity from this station has been considerably limited. There is no definite proof that it was FREEDOM but on Sunday 17th April a sporadic strong stereo signal playing rock and pop music was heard for about 10 minutes interfering briefly with MAINLINE's transmissions on the same channel; the time was approximately 9.00 pm MAINLINE operators didn't seem aware of the incident.

Nottingham . . . HEATWAVE COMMUNITY RADIO (105.0 Mhz STEREO)

This reggae station is very commercialised; adverts heard firstly on HCR have later been heard on ILR station Radio Trent, virtually identical in style. Every Sunday morning the station runs a religious Christian type of programme. Heatwave now broadcasts 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with virtually no breaks in transmission.

One taped announcement which is played regularly on HCR goes something like this -

"... If you tune to 105 and cannot hear HEATWAVE COMMUNITY RADIO; don't worry we will be back. ..."

MAINLINE RADIO INTERNATIONAL (105.5 Mhz Mono FM)

This station tends to play a lot more hip-hop, rap funk and soul music than HCR and isn't as commercialised. Some DJs heard on MRI include 'Gold Finger', 'J.R.' and 'Action Man'.

The station has been off the air since Friday 29th April - I can only speculate that the station is controlled by the same people associated with HCR, and that they may have decided to cease MRI's operation so HCR can be expanded further. It is debateable at the moment, whether or not the station will return to the airwaves in the near future. A Contact address for the station was given as; 25, Bentinck Road, Hyson Green, Radford, Nottingham, NG7 4AA.

WEST MIDLANDS.

Birmingham . . . ENTERPRISE FM (91.9 Mhz FM)

ENTERPRISE can still be received daily in Nottingham. One night there was an interesting live broadcast from a local nightclub, featuring interviews, requests and dedications with several of the guests present in a noisy atmosphere.

Merseyside.

Liverpool . . . RADIO MERSEYWAVES (1242 Khz MW)

It is often possible to hear this station on sunday afternoons on 1242 Khz mw here in Nottingham; however, the reception quality is understandably weak.

Paul Watson

I feel Andy Walker was a bit harsh of Irish Short Wave stations in his comment last month. True they might not be blameless but I think criticism can be levelled at operators from other countries too.

For taking up valuable wavebands with Top Forty pop, and amateurish DJs, then a few British stations are guilty of this, feeling switching on a transmitter and pumping out Kylie Minogue and Wet Wet Wet records will guarantee them an instant audience.

Also annoying are the European stations whose DJs are under the impression that they are fluent in English. If they can't speak English they should use their mother tongue. Before I'm branded a racist - Is there any point listening to someone who doesn't make sense? Another European favourite is making a mess of their modulation so it splatters everywhere - far worse than the high powered Irish.

I agree with Andy stations that offer a musical alternative should be encouraged, but they are still a narrow minded lot. We are hardly bombarded with Country and Western, Big Band, Blues or Classical stations. It is either Oldies or Indie Music (No complaints about the latter)

But I do disagree on one thing. I don't want all the stations coming on with Free Radio News. This is pointless - and will become just monotonous. How many times do you want to be told that Radio Dublin is on 6910.

On the subject of Radio Dublin - Andy thinks they have sense to stay out of 48 metres with their pop. But by broadcasting in the bands above 6400 and 7000 kHz only aggravates the utility users increasing the heat on 48 metre band operators when the utilities complain about their transmissions being interrupted by Pop Music.

It seems to me that Short Wave operators on the whole - there are exceptions - lack imagination or lack time to put together a decent programme. There seemed a tendency to mock John England's 4FWS but at least he was different and provocative.

Most seem to be the radio equivalent of a partially set jelly.

Mike Ross

By the time I finished my stay in London I had developed a bit of a phobia about tower blocks, which was surprising as I spent my final year living in one of the less desirable parts of the city. As mentioned last time there was always the possibility of getting caught by suspicious caretakers, or the passing public, but the greatest fear was of 'Eric'...

Eric Arthur Gotts, the bogeyman of free radio, has been around since the year dot, and the stories about him portray the man as everything from the DTI equivalent of the Sweeney to Hitler's brother, with some incredible chip on his shoulder about free radio stations. The few times that I have seen him seems to bear out some of the stories so perhaps it was fortunate that I only had one real close encounter of the 'Eric' kind;

Back in 1981 London Music Radio and Radio Zodiac both used the same tx, with LMR on during Saturday evening and Zodiac on Sunday afternoon. Sometimes live shows would be put out, linking from Roger Vosene's flat in Camden to a nearby suitable tower block, but otherwise the programmes were taped and played back from site on a reel to reel. One site that we used was a group of four or five blocks at Kensal Green; we would use one block until we lost the equipment then move to another in the row. Perhaps not too intelligent but then we didn't use gear to often. One precaution was to listen out on the DTI radio frequency, which was around 86MHz, and switch off if they were tracking our station; they soon caught on to that idea and either changed frequencies or kept radio silence. . . . anyway that's getting away from the subject. As I was saying, we had been using these tower blocks in North West London, and for various reasons were relying on a fairly old reel to reel for these programmes, when Chris and myself drove to the site to collect the gear after Zodiac shut down at 6pm. The tx was on a timeswitch, and due to switch off at about 6.15, Chris and I were undecided whether to wait until it turned off or collect the stuff immediately when a mysterious voice appeared on the signal "I'm at the top of the block, there's nobody here so I'll wait and see if anybody turns up. . ." or words to that effect. While we had been waiting at the bottom of the block the DTI had been waiting at the top for us, and one of the waiters had radio'd down to the others in a car at the bottom. Fortunately their radios work on AM which had been picked up by the tape recorder and rebroadcast through the tx for all to hear.

We waited at the bottom of the block for about twenty minutes for the DTI to appear with the gear, then four of them got into a car and headed over towards West London with us trailing them about a hundred yards behind. We were fairly sure that their target was Thamside Radio, who had just started their evening broadcast and were using a site somewhere near to Shepherd's Bush. After about a mile or two they seemed to catch on that someone was following them (we were the only two cars on the road) and pulled into the side, we passed them and they pulled out and started following us! What fun! We recognised two of the DTI team as Eric Himself and Brian Copsey and spent about ten minutes leading them towards northwest London before we lost them, or they lost us, then we raced over to Thamside to warn them what was afoot.

As I mentioned earlier Radio Zodiac FM also shared our tx for their 3-hour Sunday programme of new wave music. The station was run by Roger Vosene, former op of Zodiac SW, who amazingly was doing a course at the same college that I was at. This only came to light when muggins here, wearing his anorak plastered with free radio badges, stepped out of a lift to be asked if I'd ever heard of Zodiac. One thing lead to another and soon he had revived Zodiac on FM with the help of Chris Miles. The studio at his flat in Camden was used for both LMR and Zodiac live broadcasts. We also helped out the Dread Broadcasting Corp, London's only reggae station, with equipment and the atmosphere at the weekend meetings at Camden used to be something else, man!

While all this was going on I had got in with another station in southwest London; I had heard a rather scratchy signal from a station calling itself Parkside Radio and giving out a phone number from Roehampton in Surrey. Armed with portable radio and A-Z I caught the next tube and bus there wondering if they were transmitting from the same area as the 'phone number - they were!

Using the radio I traced them to the middle of Roehampton but was unable to find the site. Eventually I found the number, as it turned out from a phone box about a hundred yards from the site, and was invited to the studio. This was located in a nearby terraced house, and although the op denied at first that the tx was there he later admitted that it was on the flat roof of a house four houses up the row, with the aerial disguised as. . . . a 2 element FM aerial! this meant that if there was such a thing as a raid the DTI would raid the house up the road while he rescued the tx. Nice idea. The studio consisted, like just about every other I had seen, of two hi-fi type decks, basic 5 channel mixer and a tape deck. The tx was housed in a plastic ice-cream carton and this gave rise to the odd problem: Barry, the op tended to leave the rig out on the roof, just connecting up the 12 volt supply when he wanted to operate; one day the tx refused to work, and in the end he had to go up onto the roof and retrieve it. The problem turned out to be three inches of water that the thing was swimming in, and since many of the capacitors were those terrible compression types it was almost impossible to dry it out enough to run it. After playing the hairdryer over it for an hour it seemed okay, until it was trimmed for maximum power when all sorts of interesting things happened with blue flashes from the rig and funny noises from the radio. Needless to say he had to replace all the caps.

Despite using the same site for practically all his broadcasts he never had any DTI problems, but then they did tend to go for the bigger stations. I heard that they had a narrow escape when they closed down and drove around the corner to find Eric (or reasonable duplicate) and friends grouped around a radio. Lucky ?

In Wavelength 23: Odds and ends, How we persuaded Capital Radio to give us 3000 records, Then and Now (a comment) .

Steve West

Flaming June had just about burned itself out when Adrian Cooke appeared on my doorstep. The reason for this apparition was that we had planned a sequel to our previous overseas escapades (detailed in FGMII 1.) and this time his lordship wanted to be in on the action.

As last time this trip would be combining business with pleasure; we would be collecting the new Radio Stella tx and taking it over to Ireland for installation in a yet to be decided location. We arrived at engineer Chris Evans' house in the afternoon to collect the new rig and at once discovered the first problem - the tx took up most of the back of the car and we wondered if it might not raise a few eyebrows at the border. To give you an idea of the size of the thing, it is rated at about 250 Watts and consists of a large 'cabinet' for the power supply and two chassis for the tx and modulator which use an 813 and 4 807s respectively. Once loaded into the back of the car we wondered if there would be enough space left for Jock and his gear, but if necessary we reckoned that we could survive until we got over the Irish Sea and then leave the tx with friends until a site could be found.

We headed north for Scotland: first stop was to be WMR, which Adrian had never seen but had heard plenty of tales about, then across to Edinburgh to collect Jock Wilson, the Stella op. WMR was reached mid morning and Jack Russell spent some time admiring the ironwork in the back of the car, then it was on to Edinburgh where we finished some last minute shopping and stayed overnight at Jocks house ready for an early start the next day.

We were off! Leaving the city at dawn we drove to Cairnryan for the Larne ferry, and by late morning were heading South for Belfast and the border. Surprisingly there was no trouble crossing the border, where the Irish customs is two miles inside the border, and stopped off at Boyneside Radio's relay, just over the borderline itself. Unlike last time this was putting out regional programmes rather than just relaying the station output and we were shown the Boyneside Radio standard MW tx (for description refer to previous article) Back in the car and a few hundred yards more brought us to Radio Carousel, who had moved out of Dundalk to a Hotel by the main road. Since we were in a bit of a hurry we didn't stay too long but took some photos of the studio (the tx site was some distance away) and left. So far we had visited two stations and not even through customs.

Adrian Cooke

It all started last June when feeling rather Public spirited we published an article under the title "Frequency Watch". With research done by Steve West we tried to show how certain stations were just asking for trouble by sitting on top of the marine emergency channels. Some stations then had the sense to move, others not. This lead on in time to pieces on co-channel interference. Involving amongst others Radio Rainbow, Britain Radio, Radio East Coast Commercial, Spectrum Leisure Communications, WFRL and more recently WABC, who as far as Short Wave is concerned have disappeared to where they came from, and rather swiftly.

Unfortunately we appear to be preaching to the converted, as for some reason, perhaps lack of frequency research, which is inexusable at the best of times, especially on Short Wave, - Stations are still not watching their channels.

The latest to add to this growing list is Radio Pamela, Who for many weeks used 6225 on a fortnightly basis, despite occasional splatter from the powerful 6240 transmitter of Ireland's Radio Rainbow. However with the arrival of World Mission Radio on 6215, and later the move of Radio Rainbow to 6230 the use of 6225 became impossible and so a new channel was chosen. This was 6815, where they were heard on April 24th. Radio East Coast Commercial however, in a well publicised move switched frequency from 6310 to 6815 on April 3rd, although technical problems did prevent their programmes from being heard until the following week. It wasn't until May 15th that problems really became apparent with both Radio Pamela and Radio East Coast Commercial on the air, and although the latter clearly had the stronger signal listening to either station comfortably was as good as impossible. A similar situation has occurred since with on June 5th RECC simulcasting on both 6815 and 6310 (the channel they left as it was thought to be too crowded) RECC's Norman Nelson explained to Wavelength that although RECC does follow a regular first Sunday schedule for the Dx programme the station does like to be heard at other times when listener's letters can be featured, amongst other things. Certainly RECC has been on more than usually of late. For Radio Pamela's part the station claims to have used 6815 regularly. However although 6815 was used for a brief period during the autumn of 1987, and more recently for some after hours SOS Radio Pamela has not used 6815 regularly, recently.

Perhaps some kind hearted operator could send both stations some new crystals, if indeed there are any clear frequencies left.

The Government has decided to postpone plans for the development in radio for the United Kingdom due to lack of parliamentary time. The Home Office apparently has a number of more important bills to put before the House, however there are some back bench MPs who still want the bill put forward in the next session. Broadcasting Minister Timothy Renton has said that the legislation will now become part of the Broadcasting Bill which is expected to include major changes to Britain's television channels. The news has not surprisingly annoyed many of the potential community stations, and gives many IBA stations the chance to increase their foothold on British broadcast -ing by offering split AM/FM services. Cold Feet again from the Government.

In Ireland, a country who has had almost as many delays in Radio legislation The minister for Communications, Mr Ray Burke has said that the current pirates should be off the air by the end of 1988 ahead of licences which will become current in the New Year. Most controversial of the already proposed legislation is the two stations to which Dublin will be allocated a massive fall on the number of stations currently enjoyed in the Capital City. A new broadcasting comission will oversee the operation whilst fines of between £800 and £20,000 will be given to those who fail to comply with the new laws.

Andy Walker

This time we take a look at what most people would think is a religious radio station, which it is to a point.

WCSN is the World Service of the Christian Science Monitor, which you may or may not know is a religious, independent newspaper which was launched in 1908 to promote Christian science, which I won't go into right now. The station currently uses two transmitters. The WCSN 500Kw is sited 25 miles north of Bangor, Maine, and broadcasts to four regions - Northern Europe, Southern and Eastern Europe, The Middle East and West Africa and Central and Southern Africa. The second transmitter is KYOI on the Island of Saipan in the Western Pacific Ocean, which was purchased by WCSN in December 1986. WCSN has a daily two hour broadcast featuring a varied schedule of programmes plus news bulletins at the top of the hour and 30 minutes past the hour. Most of the output is of informal information, a look at listeners' letters, current affairs and a different music programme is featured each day. Most of the religious programming is transmitted at the weekends, which I personally avoid. You can tune into WCSN on their broadcasts to Europe at 0600 UTC on 9495 31metres, 1400 UTC 13760 21 metres, and 2000 UTC 15390 19m. The station produces a colourful broadcasting schedule and a very colourful QSL card. If you wish to write to the station for a schedule of their broadcasts the address is;

WCSN World Service
Po Box 860
Boston MA
USA 02123

Keep Listening :

The BBC recently made a major decision by deciding that when talking technical the Corporation will refer to aerials as antennas, thus leaving the non technical listener wondering what is being talked about. But what of the BBC Staff Magazine - Well Aerial is safe, being named after the Airy Spirit in Shakespeare's The Tempest!

The move by Peter Phillips from Caroline 558 to the Kent based commercial station Invicta Radio has been greeted with some amusement in Offshore circles, Peter having moved from Kent's Number One radio station, to the Number two station. Invicta actually announce themselves as being Kent's Number One, but there again they would, wouldn't they!

We made mention in our last issue that Radio One DJ Dave Lee Travis was looking for pastures new. We understand that on leaving the National Network Dave will be joining ILR station Leicester Sound.

The BBC who are on a major cost cutting exercise have found a way of cutting down the number of DJs on Radio One - by making clones of Mike Smith. Already installed are Mark Goodier on Saturday evenings, and the new host of the Breakfast Show which has not gone unnoticed by the joint BBC/IBA publication "The Listener" who in their May 19th edition wrote

"His qualifications include an award for a programme about the Holy Land, clean cut blond good looks, and a voice almost indistinguishable from predecessor Mike Smith's."

Laurie Taylor, presenter of Radio Four's "The Radio Programme" very nearly put his foot in it when introducing GWR's Simon Cooper who acts as programme organiser as well as hosting the Breakfast Show. Said Professor Taylor "I Suppose if you're Programme organiser nobody can stop you doing that!"

Neal West, Dx editor of Radio East Coast Commercial has sent his thanks to the many Free Radio enthusiasts who sent their best wishes to him following his recent illness. John England of the Four Freedoms World Service even rang the hospital all the way from Dallas, Texas. Neal will be returning to hospital for a second operation in two months time.